

36

THE
PLAIN REASONER.

Wherein

The Present State of Affairs

Are set in a New, but very obvious Light ;

The separate and connected Interests of *Great-Britain* and *Hanover* consider'd ;

And the important Question determin'd ;
whether ENGLAND be best defended by
an Army, or a Navy ; at a Distance,
or at Home.

In discussing these Points, many vulgar Arguments
are censured and exploded, and a rational, po-
litical System substituted in their Stead.



L O N D O N :

Printed for M. COOPER, at the *Globe* in *Pater-*
noster-Row. MDCCXLV.

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LONDON

Printed by M. Cooper, at the Press of the
University of Cambridge



INTRODUCTION.

 Do myself the Honour to constitute myself the Nation, by the same Authority as some Gentlemen constitute themselves the Town; having just as much Right to direct the State, as they the Stage. *Thus involving the whole Body of British Beings within me,* I conceive myself big with Expectation of the glorious Consequences, which I am told must follow a Change in the Ministry. A Change that is to produce such Events as will at once surprize and astonish the most penetrating Politicians; Seamen are now to fight, and Soldiers to fear no Colours; *Dunkirk* is to be demolished; *Gibraltar* and *Minorca* annex'd to the Crown of *Great-Britain*, *Spain* bridled with a Curb; *France* reduced within its Bounds; and I, the *English* Nation, to shine like the Sun in a Summer's Noon, Glorious and Triumphant. These will be *Halcyon* Days indeed, and such as could not fairly be expected from any Minister less able, politick and honest then who

are now to preside, and to give new Life, Vigour and Activity to a consumptive State; when if any Thing is done better than heretofore, it will at least be doing something; but if all be done, as I am taught to believe, it will be infinitely more than is expected by all, and more than is desired by many.

For however some Men may imagine, that the publick Good is universally desired amongst us, yet when the Experiment comes to be made, I am afraid it will appear, that it is much less the pursuit of the generality, than private Interest. There are certain Periods of Time when the worst thing a Man can do is either to be honest himself, or endeavour to make others so. When the Land Waters come down, there is much more Difficulty to row up to *Windsor*, then when a Summer's Drowth has slackend the impetuosity of the Current, and render'd the Force of the Stream easy to be contended with; and therefore whatever fine Imaginations may project in Theory to oppose the Stream of Folly in its full Vigour, I am afraid they will either labour in vain, or be obliged to wait a more calm and tranquil Season.

The first Attempt to make a Nation great and happy must be begun at home; the Arts of cheating, distressing and imprisoning one another; the submitting to be over-run with Thieves, Vagabonds and Smuglers; the laying of Taxes on the Community, which never
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INTRODUCTION.

v

come one third Part to the Use of the State ; the creating of Places for Men, rather than of finding Men proper for Places ; with various other Matters better mended than recited ; are to be examined into and rectified, before 'tis possible for a Statesman to say, with any Degree of Certainty, he will make us great, rich and happy.

Lycurgus well understood this, but *Lycurgus* was not a Poet ; he dealt not in fine Conceits, but in solid Rules ; he proposed to establish a lasting Government, in the Nature, Reason, and common Sense of Things ; he was a Stranger to Dreams and Fictions, his Basis of Glory was not a transient Vision ; he was a terrestrial Being, and therefore had no business in the Clouds ; the giving Oppulence, Wealth and Dignity to a State unfounded on Virtue, he knew to be building Castles in the Air, and he had no taste for Amusement and Romance.

To please the People for a Day, is at best but the Business of a Rope-dancer or Juggler. Will they reflect on the temporary Folly, and be long satisfied ? No ! He that will please them long, must resolve to battle against and conquer their Follies, make them just to themselves, and honest to their Neighbours, tender, compassionate and benevolent : In a Word, he must make them good, before he can make them great : and until I see that he pursues Means properly tending there-

to, I shall conclude all else mere Amusement, and the pretended Patriot, whoever he happens to be, an Impostor ; one who, instead of being a superlative Statesman, is at best but a Man with more Imagination than Judgment.

The general State of Affairs are now in a dreadful Situation, and which being either too difficult, or deplorable to attend to, leads us to the laying the Weight of our Miseries on such Things as, if they have any, have a very distant Relation thereto ; a Man can't be said to want Shoes, who has only such as pinch him a little, and if he will equally complain with those who have none, who can help smiling. Yet such is the present Situation of Affairs, that while we aim to relieve those who are only a little pinch'd, we quite lose sight of the Melancholy Estate of them who have none ; and to save one from a little Pain, which himself is capable of removing, we suffer the other to be tortured by the Rigour of the Season without Redress.

It is easy to amuse us with a Change of Men, and even of Measures too, but if such only relate to foreign Affairs, who can presume to say, they will do for the best. The generality of Mankind must judge by Events ; the best Measures may prove unlucky, and the worst fortunate. By this a Statesman can acquire no certain Reputation, let his Conduct be ever so even, the Event ever so happy,

INTRODUCTION. vii

py, but may draw on himself an endless Oidium, by the least Mismanagement or unhappy Event; while he who makes the Virtue of the People his first Principle of Government, can't avoid being the Object of reverence, and Esteem of future Ages.

The setting out with Power to act for the best abroad, while that which alone can support such Pursuits, and bring it to a happy Crisis, is neglected at home, is like beginning the Roof of a House, before laying the Foundation; and has been the secret Reason why, at all times, the same Ministries who have been encouraged to prosecute great Affairs abroad, with the universal Consent of the People one Day, and have succeeded beyond their warmest Hopes, have, as it were, the next been mob'd out of their Measures villify'd and condemn'd. I need not name the Seasons when these things have happened, they are too recent and obvious; but did they happen so in that glorious Age when *Cecil's* Ministry shone with resplendent Lustre, when civil Government was most attended to, and the Manners of the People suited to the Emergency of the Times? Were not Men made brave, steady, and of a Mind, by their Superiors having a due Regard to their Morals, as well as to their Discipline, to their private Good as well as publick Honour? and will any Statesman lose sight of such necessary Establishments, and yet pretend to
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please the People, and to keep them uniform, steady, and adherent to the best of his foreign Pursuits? If he can do this, he will be happy indeed not to find himself mistaken? 'Tis plain the great Lords *Hallifax*, *Sommers*, *Godolphin*, &c. forgot this, and by rather trusting to their Abilities and honest Endeavours, then the fundamental Principles of Government and Genius of the People, were stopt short in the Career of their most sanguine Views, and the great Fabrick they were building, on a sudden vanished into Smoak.

The Morals of the People since that Time have been much of the wrong Side of mending; and if they were too bad to bear such Measures then, how much more will they be so now?

It appears from hence, that Ambition rather misleads Men into an Affectation of being great, than to the attending to the only Means that can possibly make them so, and at the same time support them in it; yet how does our wretched Judgments fatally seduce us into a Desire of being powerful, purely that we may be Lords of Misrule, and head the factious Pursuits of Fools and Madmen, who change their Opinions with every Wind, and are equally troublesome and discontented with Friends and Foes, with this only Difference, that they disgrace those they esteem.

INTRODUCTION. ix

esteem their Foes, only when they can, but their Friends they set up on purpose.

Who then, that are in their Senses, would brigue for Power, and suffer themselves to break through a peaceful Calm, to engage in Storms and Tempests? What is there, in this Life, that a Man of Fortune wants, that can induce him rashly to venture on a troubled Sea, where 'tis infinite Odds but he's wreck'd; to leave the *Halcyon* Repose on the soft verdant, variegated Bank, immur'd on the one Side by whistling Reeds and pointed Sedge, guarded on the other by *Meander's* gentle Stream, whose soft Murmurs lull his tranquil Mind, and banish brooding Cares, for Hurry, Confusion and Discord, to live like the *Pet-terel* in one continued Tempest, and forget he was born to be happy?

When our Reason leaves us, or is seduced by fantastic Visions of Glory and Grandeur, Ambition immediately seizes the whole Man, and turns his Dispositions so intently on being deified and adored, that he keeps sight only of the Point in view, but forgets the Means which can alone lead him to the Attainment: Like the Child whose Parents have put it into his Head, that he is one Day to be a Secretary of State, Embassador or Bishop, without telling him, that the Attending to his Learning can alone give him a Chance to be any thing significant; he is fondled into a continued Pursuit of the End,

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while he is fool'd out of the Means; and both Child and Parents may rather have been said to have been dreaming, than thinking. 'Tis exactly the same Case with the Man, whose Ambition, rather than Judgment, prompts him on to a Desire of ruling a rich and powerful Nation: On the contrary, when Ambition is attended by suitable Abilities, it loses the Appearance of being a Vice, and becomes, if not really, yet something very much like a Virtue, more especially when it is so happily turned, as to make the private Good the Basis of publick Glory.

Tho' many Ministers justly merit Contempt, yet all claim our Pity, since 'tis almost impossible for a Minister to be what he ought. To be a good General, or an Admiral, it is, commonly speaking, sufficient to be well vers'd in this or that peculiar Science, and to be fortunate; but the Minister that will flourish and be admired, must have such a happy Genius and Abilities, as not only to please both Prince and People, but also to establish in their Minds a firm Belief, that it is their respective Interests to be pleased, which is perhaps impossible, in a Nation where hardly two People are of a Mind, where two rarely reason on the same Principle, and where the Generality don't reason at all. He must know more than ever Man knew, or morally

rally speaking can know, and must do what I am pretty sure can never be in his Power; he must annihilate two Thirds of the Places, yet have more to dispose of than if they had subsisted; he must not dispose of the publick Money, but for the publick Service, yet he must have more to bestow in Pensions and Gifts, than if all the publick Money was appropriated for that special Purpose; he must oblige every body, yet in effect never oblige any body; and as the greater Part must be disappointed, so the Majority will be always his Enemies; for as all will think they have a Right to his Favour, so every one will be angry that don't enjoy it, tho' 'tis morally impossible they should; if he has any real Friends he won't know it, because all who depend on him will appear to be so, and then, in effect, he had as good be without any: In a Word, if he is a good Man he must make himself miserable, if wicked, he will make every body so. This being the true Portrait of a *British* Minister, I shall be glad to know who the Man is that chuses to sit for his Pincture.

To conclude, if the People will have a good Minister, they must establish him on the Basis of their own Virtue. Honesty and De-neracy can no more incorporate together, than Oil and Vinegar; and therefore to expect a good Minister, while we ourselves have our Hearts set on Vice and Folly, and to
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have our publick Affairs go well while our private Affairs are in Confusion, is at once equally irrational and impracticable. Whether therefore our Ministers be Men of mean Parts, or wilfully pursue wrong Measures, or that we ourselves want Judgment, Virtue, or Unanimity, is immaterial, if we are resolved only to change that which rather pleases our present Fancy, than what most really merits our serious Attention; which to explain in a more ample Light, is the present Business of the *plain Reasoner*.



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HE uncertain Dispositions of Mankind, as they are agitated by Unskilfulness in publick Affairs, narrow Conceptions on extended Subjects, Piques, Prejudices, or Self-interests, seem now to have got the better of all Reason and Judgment; and while we are warmly railing at the growing Power of *France*, we are attempting to receive her Dictates with open Arms, and finish our Destruction. Those who write against one Ministry, for suffering her Power to rise, write against the next, for using every Art to suppress it: One will have it done one way, the other another, and the third no way at all; all pretend the Good of their Country, and think this only can be promoted by bringing *France* low, yet quarrel with every Means tending thereto. If we trust to our Navy and make no Alliances, then we are to be

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ruined for want of them ; if we make Alliances and conform thereto, in the way that all Powers must that ever make any, then we ought to trust only to our Navy : In Conclusion, we are to support our Constitution, preserve our Liberties, check the Power of *France*, and be the Arbitrators of *Europe*, without any one fixt Principle, or rational Pursuit ; and are to act the Statesmen and Dictators on as ridiculous, wild, and indigested Systems, as ever entered into the Imagination of the amorous, sublime *Don Quixote*. This will appear but too evident on looking some forty Years backward ; It was, in the Reign of Queen *Anne*, the unanimous Opinion of Prince and People, that *France* was too powerful, and was every Day growing greater ; that such Power ought to be check'd by every Means, and at any Expence ; in order whereto Alliances were made, Armies raised, Fleets fitted out, and to war we went ; Fortune favoured us, the Genius of *France* drooped before us, their Armies were destroyed, their Fleets laid up to rot, their Trade ruined, and their People starved ; When on a sudden, as if some evil Spirit had possessed us, an universal Outcry was raised against the War, the best Ministry we ever had dismissed, and by a Peace suddenly clapt up, the most wicked and dishonourable that in the Situation of Affairs could possibly have been contrived, we were instantly thrown
back

back to where we begun, with fifty Millions Debt into the Bargain, and the Affairs of *France* left in such a Disposition, as in this Interval to have risen and flourished, in a manner their warmest Views and Wishes could not either have hoped or foreseen: Their Trade from that time, rose with a surprising Celerity, and ours, in Proportion, fell off and decay'd; and we, gradually, as in parallel Cases always must happen, became contemptible as they rose and triumph'd. Even *Spain*, one of the weakest Powers in *Europe*, insulted us with Impunity; and we were told by an impudent *French* Scribler, that we were now no more like our Countrymen in *Cromwell's* Time, than the *Monks* of *Rome* were like the old *Romans*. It's plain, from hence, we were still in the wrong; and so we were before the Foundation of our Dishonour was laid; and so as long as the Mob are pleased to say so, so it must eternally be. That ridiculous Adage of *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, which is saying in other Words, *God delights in Confusion and Nonsense*, has greatly contributed to make us the Laughing-Stock of our Neighbours; rendered it impossible for great Genius's to govern us, and fitted us effectually for wooden Shoes.

Thus War did not please us, Peace brought us into Contempt, and in order to try every thing, we at last fell into a State of neither War nor Peace; we were hampered we knew

not how ; we were in a kind of a State of Enchantment, we could neither have Peace nor War, Trade nor be Idle ; we were suspended like a Witch in the Air on a Broom-staff, when in comes *Vox Populi*, *Vox Dei* again, as the superior Magician, breaks the Enchantment, and away we go to war again. What followed ? Why the Minister thought *Vox Populi* in the wrong, and as they would have a War, desired it might be on their own Adventure : This naturally enough created a great Out-cry ; and the People having *Vox Dei* of their Side, in Course, out went the Minister, and now the State had five times as many Humours to provide against as before. The late Minister had, at the Expence of the Publick, raised an Army of Friends, or rather Dependants, who gloried in wearing his Livery, and triumphing over the Ruins of the State. They durst not indeed say all they thought, but were determined to use all their Skill, privately to impede every Measure that was inconsistent with their established System, of dividing all the Places of Power and Trust amongst themselves, and living at the Expence of the Public, if the Successor did not fall into the same Measures ; and if he did, then his Ruin was certain : To get *Vox Populi* of their Side, they laid a Bait they were sure would take, it being purposely contrived to catch Gudgeons, which being nine Tenths of the People, one half of the

the Remainder discontented in all Changes, and the Residue landed Men : For the First, they published a certain Word called *Hanover*, and worked it up in such a Light as that the People should see, it was less our Interest now to have any thing to do with it, because we were nearer allied than in Queen *Anne's* time ; to this Word, the second Rank had naturally an Aversion, their Hearts lying chiefly at *Rome* ; and so, whether by Inclination, or only with a View to distress the State, they readily enough join'd with the first. And as to the last Rank, they were to be informed, that a War with *France* must be at their Expence ; that our Debts were a Burthen on their Estates sufficient already, and that they might as well be Slaves to *France*, as spend all their Estates to oppose her Power ; that it was very plain the same Reasons do not now take place as they did in the late War, because *France* was grown more rich and powerful, and consequently would resent the Opposition ; that, at most, they would only conquer the Continent, and would leave us, being an Island, to live, and trade, and act just as we pleased, out of pure Gratitude for the suffering our Friends and Allies to be ruined ; and *French* Gratitude and Honour could never yet, by any reasonable Men, be disputed. But how to make this connect with an Aversion to *Hanover*, wherewith they had baited for the *Vox Populi*, was not
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so easy to bring about. It was therefore consented to let the Minister first get into the War, and when they begun to feel the Weight, to fight all the Weapons together upon him, to make this *Hanover* the Principle, and the other only auxiliary; to be used occasionally. Maugre all this, it was still the Opinion of *Vox Populi* to enter into the War; but as that must be, the next Thing was to divide them about the Means, that is to say, whether by Land or Sea, it being plain that land Forces could be of no use but to defend *Hanover*, and consequently of no service to *Britain*, but at the same time a great Expence; that it was evident the naval Power was our only proper Guard, and the Service it had done in the War with *Spain*, in the protecting of our Commerce, and in distressing the Enemy, was a sufficient Indication of what it could do against both *France* and *Spain* united; that the Officers in the Army were all Beaux and Boys; those of the Navy all brave, gallant Fellows, Heroes by instinct; and this would appear very plain the first Opportunity in the *Mediterranean*, and which has happened accordingly. These Reasons taken together, and duly weighed and considered, can't help affecting Men as they ought, and inducing them to think, at least, of a Change in the Ministry, and fairly putting an end to our Expence with the War, by letting *France* have

have all *Flanders*, its Trade and Sea-ports; *Spain* have all *Italy*; our good Friend and Ally the King of *Prussia* have *Hanover*, in Compliment for his polite Message about the *Silesia* Loan, with the Addition of *Moravia*, and Part of *Bohemia*; to the Emperor, all the rest, if the *French* so please, with Part of *Austria*, and so much of *Hungary* as will make him amends for his Losses in *Bavaria*. What is to be done with *Holland* and *Britain*, their Trade and Empire, may remain for a Time in *Petto*.

There is an ugly Incident, I own, occurs, that lies a little hard on their pacifick Scheme; the same Men who are now against continuing a War with *France*, were the People who, the other Day, when their Measures were perhaps too justly complained of, ever sheltered themselves under the Sanction of the wicked Treaty of *Utrecht*; this Treaty with *France* concluded with something got; as *Gibraltar*, *Port-mahone*, and the Demolition of *Dunkirk*; a Treaty now can end with nothing but Loss and Dishonour. If the War then was a good One, it can't be now a bad One: If it was not, What Harm did the Treaty of *Utrecht* do us? If none: Why are all bad Measures to be sheltered under it? Again, the Power of *France* is either a Reality, or a Shadow. If a Reality, 'tis surely best kept at a Distance; an Addition of maritime Power to *France*, can never make

us safer or richer. If it be a Shadow, it has been so this hundred Years, and all the World in a Dream; King *William*, Queen *Anne*, and their respective Ministries, Enemies and Impoverishers of their Country; and the famous Treaty of *Utrecht*, alone, most excellent.

The Wars in both those Times were chiefly carried on by Land, and, in the latter, with great and glorious Success; by Sea, with very little Advantage; Our Sea Affairs are since that improved, and have been capable, if properly employed, and had Officers skilful and brave, of doing the State some eminent Service: They have been try'd, and have done nothing; neither has our Army done much, and we seem to be, in the whole, much in the same Situation, both by Land and Sea, as in King *William's* Time; we have more Ships indeed, but not more gallant Men; those we had then would all of them fight; of those we have now, only a few delight in the Smell of Gun-powder; so that, altogether, Things are pretty even as to Naval Affairs. As to our Army, they have done pretty well, considering all things; I hear but of few that ran away at *Dettingen*, and the rest, its admitted, behaved like *Englishmen*; and so far Things are somewhat tolerable, Soldiers and Officers must have time to be *Veterans*, both by Land and Sea; People do not fight well by Instinct, but Habit. If therefore the

Power of *France* be, as 'tis thought, in a rising Way, and aiming at the Destruction of their Neighbours, there must be time to beat them into a Sense of good Neighbourhood ; and until that be done, we may please ourselves with a Peace, but there shall be no Peace long in *Israel*. Common Sense would tell us this without the Help of Prophecy. If *France* dare break the Peace of *Utrecht*, made out of Complaisance to them, what is it that's wicked they dare not do? And if you will let them grow into Veteran Armies and Navies while yours are disregarded ; if you let them have more Subjects and more Power, will they thereby become more honest or better Neighbours? Don't all Men know, that know any thing, that Power creates Influence, that Influence commands Commerce, and that Commerce improves both Power and Influence, and that these Things are inseparably connected : Will it then happen, that when *France* adds *Flanders* to its Dominion, *Britain* will have more Trade? Can you say to *France*, as you have done to the House of *Austria* ; *you shan't trade here or there* ? I believe no Man in his Senses will have a Thought like it. It is then left to us to suffer it, or prevent it : If we suffer it, our Fate is plain, and we have no means to prevent it, but by beating them, let the Risque in other Respects be what they will. The Matter then rests only to consider, which is

the best Way to beat them. There is a Question previous to this, which is, suppose that you are in every Respect superior at Sea, and for the Present impede their Trade ; and in the mean time they over-run *Flanders*, and thereby acquire an extensive Sea-Coast and many Ports ; can any Acquisitions we are capable of making at Sea be esteemed adequate? I am afraid not, if it was only for this single Reason : The Shipping we could take would be but a temporary Injury to them ; the Land they acquire a perpetual Mischief to us ; besides that, if they embargo'd their own Trade but for one Year, and in that Time conquered *Flanders*, they would have some Loss, but at the same Time be the only Gainers. On the Contrary, if we can hinder them from making any Progress in *Flanders*, and by our small Ships and Privateers interrupt their Trade, the Burthen will suddenly become too heavy for them to bear ; but if they are once suffered to conquer *Flanders*, they will, by that Acquisition, be able to support their most warm Pursuits, and bid defiance to all the Interruptions you can give them by Sea ; and what plainly and naturally follows, will have, in the End, a naval Power, that may bid fair for the Empire of the Ocean.

As Things are at present circumstanced, while the *French* Military only hang like a Cloud over *Flanders*, and the *Dutch* are afraid
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to move, it can hardly be conceived they will be less so when the Barrier is destroy'd, and the *French* enabled to enter on the *Dutch* Provinces at pleasure. If the *Dutch* are at present pusillanimous, disheartned, or what is as bad, Pensioners to *France*; will they be less so on this Change? If not, where, and with whom are we to establish any significant Alliances?

It is a generally receiv'd Notion, that *England* can stand upon her own Bottom, without Regard to Alliances with any other Power on Earth; it is very possible she may, provided she has a Bottom to stand upon. The two Ways to establish a Bottom, whereon any Nation is singly to stand, are, a Superiority in naval Power created by a superior Flow of Commerce, and a well disciplin'd and unanimous People; a Nation thus circumstanc'd may stand upon her own Bottom against the combin'd Power of *Europe*. But the Misfortune is, that when such Power is combined, such a Situation cannot be; for where that Power is, there will the Trade be, and with that your naval Force, and consequently your offensive Power determines; and as to our Discipline and Unanimity, when thrown on the Defensive, is not very obvious; and if it was, to be on the defensive only, is at best but a terrible Situation.

A Man with a very superficial Notion of Fortification, plainly perceives the Reason of

raising Redoubts and Out-works to keep the Enemy, at least for some time, at a Distance from the Body of the Place: Alliances are the Out-works and Redoubts of Kingdoms, and whilst we are contributing to defend *Flanders* and *Germany*, we are only defending ourselves at a Distance, and thereby keeping the Enemy from attacking us nearer Home. The Bulk of Mankind may be as conceited as they please, and establish in their Minds what absurd Opinions they will; but if they will undertake to distinguish with any Degree of Judgment, they must open their Eyes a little farther than home; they must take in the whole Compass of Things together, and foresee Consequences as well as Emergencies. A Man in a Garrison, unacquainted with the Nature of a proper Defence, may not see either the Reason or Necessity of Out-works, while a judicious Eye discerns them at first Sight; a Man can't help having narrow Conceptions of Things, but its very unjust for him to be angry that others can see farther than himself.

Charles the XIIth of *Sweden* was certainly a Man of good natural Parts, and of almost unequalled Courage, but had narrow Conceptions, and a confined Foresight. He could not conceive how Men well disciplined, of established Courage and unanimous, could be beat by superior Numbers; at home, he was pretty much in the right; but Harraffes,

Fatigues, Change of Climate, and want of Provisions, were Contingencies his Imagination never reached. He could not believe it possible for a well fortified Town to be taken, until Experience discovered to him his Error, and narrowly escaping being made a Prisoner. The same *English* who were, at home, invincible under *Cromwel*, were beat by incomprably less Numbers at *St. Domingo*. *Cromwel*'s Imagination, all Politician as he was, could not reach the Reason of this, till it was too late, and his Designs defeated. Instances of this Nature are endless. A Man may have a very good Share of Understanding in some things, and be an absolute Stranger in many others: Every *Englishman* is a Politician, and conceives he has a Right to judge of publick Affairs; not because he understands them, but because he has Liberty to say and think as he pleases: Yet is there ever a Draper or Mercer in *England* will admit, that a Statesman has a Right to judge of their Commodities on the same Principle, but would think it extremely unjust, if in a Dispute between two of the respective Trades, a Statesman was to be the Judge; yet themselves, without knowing one fundamental Principle on which Statesmen act, will engage themselves as voluntary Judges. It is very true that the Acts of Statesmen concern the whole Community, and the Acts of particular Traders only a few
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Individuals, and therefore they conclude justly enough, they have more business with the Acts of the Statesman, than he with them. This, as I said before, may give them a Right to talk, but it will never follow, that it gives them Understandings and Comprehensions equal to the Subject; tho' while 'tis conducted with Decency and good Manners it is diverting enough. If six Coffee-house Politicians meet together, they never agree in Opinions, yet each of these would have the Minister think as he does, without considering what the rest of the World would, in such Case, think of them both; or if they do happen to agree in any one Point, separate them, and put each one on forming a System, and the Odds are infinite but they are as different as inconsistent and impracticable. Under the late Ministry, some People were very warm for confining the Press, and I suppose the next thing would have been to have chain'd our Tongues; this would have deprived us of the most exquisite Pleasure many of us enjoy, and would have been like making a Law to prevent our Wives being impertinent, and probably would have had the same Effect, *viz.* the making us quite Outrageous: But I should think there might be a Law made to punish impertinent Politicians, that would not be unpleasant in itself, and turn much to the Emolument of the State, which is to oblige every Man, who ei-
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ther presumes to preside at a Coffee-house, or Tavern, or that is singular or dogmatical in Politicks, to publish a System with his Name, Place of Abode and Business; that if he had not the Happiness to succeed in the Opinion of many, he might at least have the Pleasure of being laugh'd at by All.

As Affairs are at present circumstanced, I don't see how 'tis possible for the Ministry to be in the right. In the Time of the late Minister, the great Outcry was in Favour of the Queen of *Hungary*; that the Ballance of Pow'r was lost, and that we had no Allies; and nothing possess'd the Minds of Men but War, to defend the House of *Austria*, to curb the growing Power of *France*, and resume our wonted Figure and Pre-eminence in *Europe*. The then Minister was esteem'd pusillanimous, and consequently unfit to act in the retrieving our lost Glory: He must therefore go out, and a Man of Spirit be in his Place. He plainly saw this Spirit would not last long; if any Misfortune happened, the publick Debts increased, or the People pinched by their Taxes, the Outcry would be as much on the other Side of the Question, and that at a Time when it would be impossible to give them any Relief, without the utmost Dishonour, and rendring the Fame as well as the Faith of *England* contemptible; this the Experience of more Ages than one had taught him, and as it was determin'd

min'd Things must be so, he could not judge it amiss to retire. Well, a Man of Spirit appears, a War is made, Armies raised, and Fleets traverse the Ocean; it happens that neither do more than preventing the Enemy doing much: The War continues, Time wears away, the Taxes are felt, and the public Debts increase, and we are in the wrong Box still? Now what have we to do with a Land War? We should only trust to our Fleets; let us cover the Seas with Ships, ruin the *French* Trade, and that probably will make them be at quiet; but after all, if the *French* lay up their Navy, embargo their Trade, and bend their whole Force on the Continent, we shall still be in the wrong; because, as I observed before, we can do them no harm, while they will probably acquire a great Extent of maritime Coast, as rich and well seated for Trade as any in *Europe*: The Event of all this is very obvious, however glittering this acting by a Navy only may appear at first sight, more especially unless we could contrive to get better Officers than are generally employed; and if we had them, I don't see their Use, if the *French* will lie up, unless you will venture to land Soldiers on the Continent, which never succeeded when we had much more experienced Officers, and Soldiers more conversant in War than any we have now; and after all, this will still require a Land Army, at least as
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great as any we now maintain ; besides that ; we should not in any sense answer the End of our Alliances, we should be esteemed to have as little Regard to the Faith of Treaties, as we would fain persuade the World is the Case of the *French*, and which we speak of bitterly enough ; but it is not only in Words but in Consequences, that such a Behaviour might prove fatal. 'Tis plain the *Dutch*, whether occasioned by Factions or Infatuation, or both, come not heartily into our Alliance ; they seem inclined rather to run any Risques of future Evils. On our Credit, *Saxony* and *Sardinia* are both most heartily embarked, but if we leave them to the Mercy of a superior Power, what will naturally follow besides Infamy ? 'Tis plain the *Queen* of *Hungary*, to indemnify her Allies, must satisfy the *French*, in *Flanders* ; the Emperor, in *Bohemia* ; and *Spain*, in *Italy* ; and what must be the Consequence of all this, but the losing the chief Part of the Trade we have left, and have it transplanted into the Hands of the common Enemy, much too powerful already. All our inland Trade of Manufactures into *Germany*, which is one of the best Trades we now have, will be entirely annihilated ; our Trade to *Italy* and *Spain* damm'd up, and perhaps, by the Force of Influence, our only remaining valuable Trade to *Portugal* be turned into another Channel ; for how shall that Kingdom be able to

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withstand a Power, which will then be in a Condition to make all *Europe* tributary, or at least obsequious: We may then talk of our Navies, but how shall we maintain them without Commerce, without Credit, without Money; impoverished at Home, contemned Abroad; despised, neglected, and left to perish disregarded and unpitied. We ran fifty Millions in Debt the last War to avoid these Evils, and found ourselves Gainers by the Consequence, tho' betray'd into a bad Peace; will fifty more, if necessary, be worse laid out, than it was at that Time? Can you help your Allies being attacked, and your Trade being underhand insulted and ravished from you? Must you not guard against this at any Rate, at any Expence? If a Set of Thieves come to plunder my House and destroy my Estate, shall I estimate my Expence in Comparison of the Injury I am certain to suffer; shall I not hire Help to defend my Property, or shall I lie still and be undone. The *French* are as determined Enemies as any Thieves can possibly be; we have it in our Power now to check their exorbitant Pursuits; they know it and dread it, and therefore have their Agents here to corrupt the Minds of Men, and set us at Variance and Discord; no Art, no Expence is wanting whereby to forward their wicked Pursuits. If the *Dutch* are influenced and will be ruined, 'tis no Rule we should be so too; our All's at Stake,
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we must look to ourselves ; the Folly of our Neighbour is not to direct us into the same Mistake, else would one Fool make all Mankind miserable. See with what Honour, what Glory, what Intrepidity, our noble Ally the King of *Sardinia* has defended *Italy*, against the united Power of *France* and *Spain*, for the general Good of Mankind, at the Hazard of his Crown and Kingdoms, while several pitiful Fellows, who call themselves Princes, calmly receive the Yoke of *French* Slavery, and wear the Tyrant's Livery.

Hungary's Queen, a genuine Heroine, with a Soul truly glorious and immortal, collected within herself, stedfast and unmoveable as the rooted Oak, like *Jove* on *Olympus* Top she stands unshaken, and bravely bids defiance to those seeming gigantick Powers, who presumptuously attempt to storm Heaven's Throne, and throw the Universe into Confusion. Are we ourselves the *Englishmen* we pretend to be, the Men of Courage, the Men of Honour we would be thought; or the Creatures of *de Voltaire's* Creation, Men that have lost sight of the glorious Acts of our Ancestors, and pique ourselves upon being Cowards, and infamous Treaty-breakers and Slaves, the Dupes and Bubbles of *French* Tyranny, and the Contempt and Laughter of surrounding Nations; besides being infinitely mistaken in the Pursuit of our warmest Wishes, which are to be free, and as little as possible

loaded with Taxes; and yet won't see that nothing but the Power of *France* can either make us Slaves or Beggars, by robbing us, at once, of both our Liberties and Properties. And however it may seem a Paradox to those, who see things only in a single Light, yet I shall undertake to prove, that by still adding to the publick Debt, we shall not only suppress the growing Power of *France*, and nip it in the Bud, but also be in the most ready way to be easier in our Taxes. As to *France*, if we remain stedfast and resolute, 'tis impossible for her to continue her Pursuits; and the Reasons are: That although her clear Revenues are less than ours, her Expences are treble, not only in her immediate means of acting offensively, with great Armies, in *Germany*, *Flanders* and *Italy*, but also in her being obliged to sustain every Ally she has at an immense Expence, and, at the same time, to support a Number of Garrisons equal to all our Expence; and tho' the *French* King can command both the Persons and Purfes of his Slaves at pleasure, yet he can't command what they have not; and if he takes all they have one Year, he must go without it the next; the Money taken out of Trade must ruin Trade, and when the Affairs of his Slaves are rendered desperate, his own must be so too. It follows, that although his Power at home will enable him to make bold Pushes abroad, it will never enable him to continue them

them long, nor can he possibly keep peace with us for any length of Time: And notwithstanding Individuals pay more Taxes at present, yet is the Balance of the Account to the Nation, hitherto, from the Beginning of the War, more in our Favour than the Amount of all our extraordinary Taxes; and the Loss to *France*, by the valuable Prizes taken, more than double the Gain to us; and in this every Man may share that will, and thereby render his Taxes a Dream. Our Manufactures have vended even beyond our warmest Hopes, and twice the Riches have come into the Kingdom that have gone out. The only Trade *France* now has is entirely stagnated, while ours is as open and free as ever; we have our Convoys and Protections; they cannot have any. If nevertheless they will Trade, we must have the best Share in it; and if they will not trade, they are undone. We are only, on our Part, to keep them from making further Acquisitions in *Flanders* and *Italy*, either by preventing their Armies gaining ground in those Countries, or by suffering them so far to distress the House of *Austria* in *Germany*, as to oblige it to relinquish its Alliances, with *Flanders* into the Bargain.

In this Light *France* appears at best but a Bugbear that frightens weak Spirits, and intimidates short-sighted Men. Firmness and Resolution must make her sink before us,
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and nothing but the contrary Behaviour can render her really powerful.

Now as to my seeming Paradox, that the Increase of our publick Debts is the most probable, if not the only Means of lessening our Taxes. To render this clear to the meanest Comprehension, 'tis necessary to go a little round about, by entering upon an Examination why our Taxes are now so high: The Cause whereof appears to me to be, by their being laid on Commodities that are necessarily to pass through many Hands before they reach the Consumer, and consequently, in effect, pay so many different Duties; for 'tis very evident that Profit must be made, at the first Hand, of the Money laid out for Duties, and that this must increase in Proportion as it passes through all the rest: It follows then, that if those Duties were laid on the Consumer, they would, in their respective Ranks, be only one instead of many. The present Objection to this Method is two fold; one on the Part of the State, the other on the Part of the People: On the Part of the State, they don't chuse to bring down the Taxes to the Consumer, because of the greater Number of Employments, in the present Situation, in the Gift of the ruling Minister; nor do the People chuse it, because they conclude it must be done by way of Excise, to which they have such an Aversion, as is not to be surmounted, but by being to the
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last Degree distressed by much worse Measures. It follows, that nothing but extreme Necessity can bring the two Interests to a Point; and nothing create that Necessity, but such a Burthen, as in the present Situation of Things is not to be borne; such Taxes occasioned by such Debts, as our Estates are not in any Sense able to pay, which by making the publick Debts double what they are now, will be pretty near the Case. That happening, Necessity will make both Parties agree, and then the Consequence will be, that ten Millions Taxes raised on the People, will be nearly so much to the Use of the State; but as it is now, if the State receives ten Millions, the People pay thirty, on all Duties on an Average, except Land and Windows. Therefore to pay ten Millions, when the Interest of the publick Debts are near four Millions, is two Thirds less than when they are but two Millions; and consequently 'tis better to be one hundred Millions in Debt, than fifty.

This, I hope, no body will presume to dispute with me, or if they do, 'tis odds but they are worsted in the Argument; since every understanding Man immediately perceives the Force of my Reasons, and they who are ignorant will only expose themselves in the Dispute, and show they are utter Strangers to the Nature, Genius and Effects of our Taxes, as they are at present disposed and levied, which

which I would not wish any Man to be, who meddles with them.

As Matters are now circumstanced, the Reason of Man can't readily devise a Remedy. The Change of Ministers is at best but an Amusement that lulls us into a too fatal Security, renders all regular Pursuits impracticable, and the best of Ministers useless. Unsteadiness is so fatal an Evil, that were we even as heretofore, revered and dreaded by our Neighbours, and those at the Helm of Affairs as near as possible to the Nature of Angels, yet if they must be changed at every turn, and with them the System of Affairs altered, 'tis a great Doubt with me whether we had not better have one bad Minister, than many good ones so circumstanced; for it is not only the confusing and disordering of our Affairs at home, but the unsettling all our Alliances abroad, and thereby giving the common Enemy, who for many Ages has pursued one regular System, an Opportunity to ruin us one after another, and, by degrees, make all *Europe* his Slaves, or Dependants. His Emissaries here are already very strong and powerful, and dare only presume to say, *France* only wants our Trade, not our Lands; but when they have one, it would puzzle one to know what the other is good for. It happens indeed a little unluckily for them, that a War broke out before they were ready for it, and which in a great mea-

ure has marr'd, and for the Present done themselves the greatest Injury : But it must now absolutely depend on our Steadiness and Resolution to make a good Use of the Advantage, by pursuing the War with Spirit, both by Sea and Land, let the Burthen thereof be what it will. If our Taxes are heavy now, and are still increasing, which is certainly unhappy enough, yet as with good Oeconomy we can pay them, without being the worse, its certainly better than to be robb'd of our Trade, made Slaves to *France*, and turn'd out of our Country, to starve with Contempt and Ignominy. So that it is not so much the Question, whether our Taxes are already too high, and the publick Debt still increasing, which no Man in his Senses will dispute ; but whether, that of two bad States we are not in the best ? There is something consonant to this, and which I can't help remarking, which is that every Body, whether they pay Taxes or not other than in the Consumption, unite in the general Outcry ; but very few that regard, how much greater Expence we put ourselves to for those kind of Pursuits, which gradually introduce our Ruin ; that not only corrupt the Mind, and enervate the Body, but likewise empty the Purse, and so contribute every way to our Destruction ; such as profuse Living, Play Houses, Gaming Houses, Spring Gardens, Bagnios, and other little Bawdy-Houses ; the Expences whereof ap-
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appropriated to the publick Service would not only render our Taxes less felt, but make us at the same time better Men, better Subjects, and better Friends, as likewise to be able at all Times, and willing with Hearts and Hands united, to repel the common Enemy of Mankind, and to treat him with the Contempt he Merits. As it is we turn it all upon ourselves, and by our Folly, Luxury and Unsteadiness, are half made Slaves to his Hands.

The *Romans* never knew what Slavery was, till their Manners became debauch'd. But no sooner that their Souls became corrupted, but their Bodies became pliant, and Shackles as easy to them as Liberty. It was then just the same amongst them as it is now amongst us; the very pretended Patriots, and those who aim'd at destroying every regular System, were indeed oftentimes Men of Wit and Parts, but generally the most debauch'd of the People. *Clodius* was the Patriot, and *Cæsar* the Heroe; the first the greatest Debauchée of his, or perhaps, any other Time, the other the Paramour of *Nicomedes*, whilst *Milo*, *Cicero*, and many worthy Men more were pursued to Destruction.

These Examples may sufficiently intimate to us in what a terrible Situation every People must be, who once suffer their Manners to be corrupted, when they must either become Slaves or Strangers, or what is much
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the same, to the most Profligate of their Fellow Subjects; and in the End forget they were ever a Nation. Is it possible for a Man that thinks at all, to recollect the beautiful Figure, the *Campagna* of *Rome* once made, when Virtue triumph'd, and the Desolation its now reduc'd to through Vice and Folly; and not reflect, that whilst we are crying out against Governors and Taxes, we are by our own Follies and Vices on the Point of making the like Figure, over-run with Bawds, Bailiffs and Thieves, the sure Prognostics of approaching Destruction.

'Tis little to say, such or such a Minister is bad, and preys upon the Vitals of the People, while themselves are alone the Cause that such are either suffer'd or employ'd. They are rais'd to Power on the corrupt Principles of the People, and without they could not be; I say, they could not, because it was never yet known in any Age or Time, that a virtuous People had ever bad Governors. *Elizabeth* promoted Virtue and establish'd Commerce together; the People had as much real Liberty then, as they have now, but were not suffer'd to mistake Licentiousness for Liberty: In the two following Reigns, the Sovereigns lost sight of the main Bulwark of Government, by not attending to the Manners, as well as the Wealth of the People; and the Struggle that followed was rather between Virtue and Licentiousness, than Prerogative and Liberty;

the Body of the People were still Virtuous, and so indeed in many Respects was the latter Sovereign, but the Court and their Dependants monstrously corrupted; the People therefore would not be so govern'd, they would have Virtue and Justice the Standard of Power, because they themselves were virtuous, and would not therefore be made the Slaves of Folly; they did, as all other People in the like Situation ever must do, they carried their Point, and Virtue triumph'd. 'Tis very true, Corruption was not entirely banish'd, it lay like a Snake in the Grass, and in a few Years reviv'd with double Force and Vigour; and from thence one may justly date the Origin of all our Woes; and as Things are now circumstanc'd, it seems very indifferent who rules: Since the narrow Bounds of *Bedlam* is hardly to be govern'd by many, I don't see how the distracted People in the Out-skirts are to be govern'd by a few. To please Madmen is like attempting to storm the Heavens, and therefore unless Men will resolve to be sober and rational, its very idle to expect good Governors. Its very plain how this happens here; the People will have their R——s honest, as they say, tho' they know beforehand they will not be so, nor do the People seem to desire it; therefore what they mean by Honesty is not very easily understood, for they will suffer themselves first to be brib'd by them, and therefore

fore can't esteem it dishonest to reimburse at the publick Expence ; so that what the People mean by honest R-----s is not easily divin'd, and therefore, whether they are honest or not, lies not in my Breast to determine ; but its very plain, that did the People pursue virtuous Measures in their Elections, it would be easy to distinguish Honesty from Dishonesty in their R-----s which at present remains a Paradox, and will so as long as one Man pays another to be his Slave, and expects to be his Master, and really becomes so to all Intents and Purposes, while the other Side expect the same thing for being paid, but are justly enough mistaken.

Hence we perceive the plain Principle, whereon all our Sufferings are founded, and yet like Men in a Dream, wonder how it happens ; and while we disregard the Cause, we run to the Effects for Remedy, change our Ministers as often as we can, yet persist in the Means that can alone contribute to make them bad ; and this all plainly proceeds from the general Corruption of Manners, from the Peer to the Cocker : For were Men strictly Virtuous, Bribes would be useless things ; the living above our Means commands in our Affections a Desire to be supported at any Rate, and we endeavour ridiculously enough to justify by our Actions, what we condemn by our Words, and won't see that we act on exactly the same Principle
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as the little pilfering Thief, whose Destruction we pursue with uncommon Asperity; and only from thence shew, that we glory in being superior Robbers.

While such Sentiments subsist, we must either have something to ballance these Evils, or we are evidently undone; this can be nothing but personal Bravery, and that rarely subsists, when Virtue is banish'd, and without it our Fate is determin'd, tho' perhaps somewhat prolong'd. There are, I doubt not, yet remaining amongst us some who court that amiable Deity; if they can increase their Party, we shall be so much in the Road to Glory; but as Steadiness and Resolution are two of her chief Attributes, by their appearing we can only be shewn, whether there are yet remaining any of her Divine Emanations. If there are, then let us take a short View of the present State of Things.

It is previously necessary to consider, how our Affairs were situate at the Revolution: The common Enemy was then powerful to an Excess, and had not only a better Army, but a better Fleet too than we; while on the other Side, we were not only in an unsettled State, but all the Friends of an Abdicated Monarch, our Enemies, lay brooding in our Bowels; we had indeed for our Allies, the House of *Austria*, and with that the Aid of the greatest Part of the Empire and *Holland*; but the Empire had the *Turks*
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to deal with him, and *Holland* was in a great measure Defenceless; *Ireland* was in Rebellion, and a Battle lost there would have given Spirits to the victorious Party in *England*, and consequently have thrown us all into Confusion, while *Lewis* had over-run *Flanders*, and the *Turks* made a great Progress in the Empire. This was a Prospect terrible enough, and the Consequence evident; it was then judged, and with great Truth, that nothing but a fix'd Resolution to surmount all Obstacles could save us in that critical Juncture. We had a Prince bold, intrepid and judicious, and so far successful, as to settle all our Affairs in a tolerable manner at home, and to keep the *French* so employed, as not to be able to make any great Acquisitions: And our Success at the Battle of *La Hogue*, in some Measure retrieved the Dominion of the Ocean then on the Point of expiring; yet in the whole, both we and our Allies, were at best but on the Defensive, and were not so much fighting to lower the Power of *France*, as to preserve ourselves from Slavery and Ruin, and which nothing but fix'd and determined Resolutions to put all at hazard could possibly avoid. We did so, and to support such Resolves, did not so much consider the spending of Part of our Wealth, as whether we should have any to spend. The *French* plainly saw this, and therefore wisely concluded, that an advantageous Peace was
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better than a hazardous War. A Peace was made accordingly, which in Effect gave the House of *Bourbon* a very dangerous Acquisition; yet was King *William* oblig'd, through the Perverseness of a Set of Men who are always determin'd to be in the wrong to consent, or to be so distress'd by his own Subjects, as not to be able to carry on the War to its desired Issue.

However it happened then, on Queen *Anne's* coming to the Throne we came a little to our Senses, and plainly foresaw, that nothing but an effectual War could save us; we pursued it, beat the *French* Armies wherever we met them, and put *Lewis* to so much Expence on Land, as oblig'd him, purely for want of Money, to lay up his Fleet, and in the Event had it in our Power to have confin'd the *French* Limits within as narrow Bounds as we pleas'd. What happened in the Sequel, let those who delight in the inglorious Conclusion tell. However, bad as it was, the exorbitant Power of *France* was checked, *Gibraltar*, *Minorca*, *Newfoundland*, and *Anapolis Royal* were confirm'd to us, whereas at the Beginning we were not morally sure *England* was our own. We ran fifty Millions in Debt. The *French* above treble the Sum. In Process of Time they wip'd off part of theirs with a Sponge; ours remained very little lessened. The *French* are still in Debt, so are we; but with this Difference, that the keeping up of our Credit has enabled

enabled us to borrow Money at a very low Rate, while they can hardly borrow at any Interest; and the only seeming Advantage they have is the Power of the Prince to raise Money on the People at pleasure. But the Mistake lies here, it is not whether a Prince can raise Money at pleasure, but whether he can do it without making himself the worse. The King and Parliament of *England* have as much Power to raise Money on the People, as any arbitrary Prince in *Europe*; but it is not whether a Thing can be done, but whether it can be done with good Policy, and on consistent Principles.

Lewis the XIVth had certainly as much Power to raise Money on his People, as *Lewis* the XVth can possibly pretend to, but yet he ran 175 Millions *Sterling* in Debt, and could not help it, ruined the Trade of his Kingdom, and made his Subjects Beggars. To what End then tended this boasted Power of an arbitrary Monarch, unless to the Destruction of his Subjects, and, in Consequence, the weakening his own Power. Power is only useful when it tends to the universal Benefit; in any other Light 'tis Madness, and can never hurt those who soberly and resolutely repel it; and what confirms and makes this self-evident is, that *France*, during the Peace, has grown both rich and powerful, during the War, weak and beggarly. Will any Man in his Senses infer from hence, that the re-

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selling the Power of *France*, keeping her employed in an expensive War, and ruining her Trade, will make her more powerful ; and that we are to let her do what she pleases, by ruining our Allies and conquering *Flanders*, purely because her King has Power to ruin his Subjects when he will ?

'Tis evident that, in many Respects, we are now in a much better Situation to repel the Power of *France*, both by Sea and Land, than we were at the Revolution, and for a long time after. The first Thing I shall mention to make this evident is, the reciprocal Debts ; *France*, I do assert, is at this time above one hundred Millions Sterling in Debt, and those who won't believe me, may satisfy themselves by looking into *du Tot*, whose Veracity the *French* themselves have never disputed, because they knew it was not disputable ; our Debts are very well known to be near fifty Millions. Those who will look into the same *du Tot*, will find the natural Revenues of *France* little different from those of *England* ; and they will find likewise, that the *French* Debt is not only the double of ours, but also the Interest much higher ; and 'tis very well known that their Credit is so low, that Money is hardly to be borrowed at any Rate, which is very far from being our Case, who have Resources infinite ; Whereas the *French* have none, but in the Assistance of *Spain*, (which is perhaps not over-burthened) and

and in the Hopes, one Day, through our Divisions, of conquering *Flanders*, and in an advantageous Peace.

France and its Allies can probably bring more Troops into the Field, than *Britain* and her Allies, but then she cannot do it but at a vastly superior Expence; for she is not only obliged absolutely to support all her Allies, except *Spain*, with Money, but likewise acts offensively, while *Britain* is under no Necessity to be, nor ever has been, at one third of the like Expence. How *France* can hold this long, without a supernatural Assistance, is not to be devised by the Heart of Man: Great and bold Pushes she may make, while we stand gaping and staring at her, like *Erasmus's* Ideots at the Preacher; but if we resolutely oppose her, she's undone. By Sea, 'tis evident, we have much the Advantage in Ships of War, and 'tis our own Fault if we don't employ both proper Directors, and proper Officers. No Nation has better, nor perhaps their Equals; I speak of a few Superiors; and 'tis easy to conceive, that were they employed, they would make the rest do their Duty, or employ none that did not. Our Superiority then lies in Officers and Ships, and 'tis very well known we don't want Men, although they are somewhat scarce; but that is more owing to a Notion of the Necessity there is of having all Seamen,

than that Men, in many Respects equally useful, are wanting.

From all which Premises, I shall take the Liberty to conclude, that our Credit is vastly superior, and consequently better able to support a Land War on the Defensive, than the *French* on the Offensive; that our Navy, and other armed Ships, may ruin their flourishing Trade, while our own is defended and improved; and that, all things taken together, we are in a much better Situation in respect to *France*, than at the Beginning of any War we ever entered into with her, for at least this hundred Years past. And is this a Situation, my Friends and Countrymen, to decline defending ourselves against an inveterate Enemy, and of becoming Slaves to a Power we ought to look upon with contempt? Can an *Englishman* say this without blushing; can he pretend the Increase of our Taxes, if well managed, are in any Sense adequate to the Loss of our Liberties and Commerce, and becoming the Slaves of Scoundrels? Are we to be bullied out of our Reason and common Sense by a Pack of Hackney Hirelings, who never had an Acre of Land, or ever paid a Groat Taxes; Fellows who are eternally ringing the same Peal of *Hanover, Hanover!* purely to get Bread for themselves and Patrons! Fellows who whilst they are dreaming of nothing but Turnips, forget of how much better Digestion they are to an *English* Stomach
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than wooden Shoes; and yet, after all, these Turnips, good as they are, are no Part of the Question. The true State of the Question is, Whether 'tis best that we defend and support our Allies and preserve *Flanders*, or that we, by our Inconstancy, become a Proverb amongst the Nations for Treaty-breaking and Infamy, and are left to ourselves without Credit, without Honour, without Power, and suffer our most inveterate Enemy to possess one of the richest maritime Provinces in *Europe*?

Those People who are for having an Army to day, a Fleet to morrow, and they know not what the next, are generally either a wrong-headed set of Wretches, or of that Rank of Men who are Fools enough to fancy, that they shall be great and happy, when the rest of their Fellow-Subjects are ruined and miserable. When the House of *Bourbon* are possessed of *Flanders* and *Italy*, and their Power thereby so firmly establish'd as to dictate to *Europe* at Pleasure; their narrow Conception of Things won't permit them to see, that every Inch the *French* gain, is a Fathom Loss to us, both in Trade and Credit; or they are the secret Emissaries of *France*, the Advocates for wooden Shoes, who really wish these things, and, by propagating Discords and Changes, aim at throwing us into Confusion. A little Retrospection will clear up this to the dimmest Sight;

Sight ; they united first with Abundance of very honest Men, in desiring a War, because they thought the Ministry would either not enter into a War, or, if they did, that it would put it into the Power of their Adversaries to distress them ; and if they did not, to set up the same Arguments against the Power of the House of *Bourbon*, as I do now. In the whole, it was indifferent to them, whether War or no War, so there was but room left for finding fault. First one War was made, that did'nt do enough ; then we must have another ; then the House of *Austria* would be ruined if we did not send Men as well as Money ; What did the Soldiers do idling at home, except to enslave the People ? Now it is, What have they to do abroad, since we ought to depend on our Fleet only ? This is just as the *French* Ministry would have it, to make us change our Measures with the Moon, to lose our Credit and be trusted by nobody, and so become the easier Prey to our Enemy. Yet these are the People who, with consummate Impudence, presume to vilify their fellow Subjects, and charge them with Corruption, while they are themselves the only Fautors of Corruption and Infamy ; that like, common Bawds, get their Bread by ruining the Morals of the Unwary.

These divide themselves into various Classes. One makes *Hanover* the Thesis ; another, Trade,

Trade, and what else he equally understands; a Third, somewhat more candid, or less guarded than the rest, professes himself the Champion of *France*; while a Fourth turns Historian, and hopes in time to reach, if his Work sell, that Period of Time wherein he only intends to flourish, little dreaming that he is going to ride an unbitted Nag that has hitherto thrown all his Riders. Thus one emerges out of the *Dunciad*; another out of *Edinburgh School*; a Third out of *St. Omers*; and a Fourth voluntarily, and without the least Inducement, except that of getting Bread, plunges himself into a Gulph, from whence no one has yet escaped; and all this for the sake of getting Bread, fixing an eternal Sarcaſm on their Country, and making it the Contempt of its Neighbours.

I heard, one Night, a very odd Remark made on two Persons who have Places at Court; the one was said to be made Poet-Laureat, because he was a good Comedian; the other the King's Painter, because he was a good Architect. It was at the same time enquired, whether his Majesty's Barber was a good Shoe-maker; but may not one with equal Justice enquire, whether a bad Poet, an ignorant Priest, or an idle Physician, are the properest Persons to treat on Trade and Government: Would not scanning of Verses, mumbling of *Ave-Maria's*, or collecting of Simples, or doing any other simple Thing,
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better suit their little Minds ; yet these are the People, whose wretched Harangues to the Mob are to be our Rule of Government. O *England ! England !* into what a State of Degeneracy art thou fallen ! The Manners of thy Sons govern'd by the Dictates of Scribblers, and thy Honour as-rid by Hirelings, who earn their Bread at the Expence of thy Shame and Infamy ; pick up their Crumbs of Sustenance out of the Brains of thy Children, and, like the Gypsies, put out their Eyes in order to make them completely Beggars !

It would be no unpleasant Scene to view these Harpies assembled with their Patrons, on the new Change in the Ministry ; their Puzzle and Perplexity on what Principle to write now, whether for, or against the Government ; or, as usual, on no Principle at all. I hope it will be in Favour of those who are out, because that's always right ; and these Sort of Gentry are pretty peremptory, and never in the wrong ; and indeed 'tis impossible to be otherwise, since they are too wise to let any body judge but themselves ; their Works are only to instruct and advise, not to be carp'd at, or found fault with ; and as long as you have them for Time and Money, you can't justly complain of the Bargain, since they are alone infallible. So the Country Barber at once larders your Face with Soap ; and your Brains with News ; he re-

moves from you what you are glad to be rid of, and, in lieu thereof, gives you what you had better be without ; but who can help admiring what these cunning Shavers dictate, or refuse being wise at the Expence of a Penny ?

This may look a little like running away from the main Purport of my Subject, but it must be considered that Politicks is an abstruse Science, attempted by every body, understood by very few : This general Ignorance makes it very dangerous to suffer innocent People to be imposed on by Impostors and Pretenders ; therefore to open their Eyes to see what is bad, is previously necessary to the shewing them what is good ; and although it comes at the latter End of this, it will serve as a kind of Introduction to my next. However, it may not be amiss here to remark farther, though it be in Favour of these Vermin, that few People turn their Conversation on any thing, but that Specie of Politics which very remotely concerns them ; and instead of making it an Amusement, warm themselves at once into bad Subjects and bad Neighbours, lead the whole Circle of their Acquaintance into Heats and Contests, and thereby disturb the general Repose of Society, bring an unnecessary care and trouble upon their own Minds, and render them anxious and concerned about the avoiding of Evils not like-

ly ever to happen ; or in suggesting that such things are Evils which, clearly seen, are essential Benefits.

To those whose Eyes are confined to narrow Prospects, it is not difficult to persuade, that what lies more remote is evil, because they presume the Informer has seen it, and comes to convince them of Facts, little dreaming they are generally Ills of the Author's own Creation, and are only introduced to lessen the little Prospect Men happily enjoy ; like Birds of ill Omen, their Business is only to terrify.

Can any Man in his Senses believe, that every Ministry are perpetually in the wrong, and that all Mankind who attempt to govern are Fools and Madmen ? yet such is our present unhappy State, that we are daily taught, or rather bully'd into a Belief that it is so, and that too by a Set of Men that are so far from knowing any thing of the matter, that they don't in the least understand the Nature of the Argument they so warmly pursue, nor have any Precedents for the Rules they affect to establish, which are at once both very narrow and very false. They conceive now, that the *English* should only fight by Sea, and they ground this on a Conceit, that we are a maritime Power, and the Money laid out on the Navy is chiefly spent at home, therefore that only ought to be employed ; yet say, when Land Forces are necessary
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to be used in our own Defence at home, we have neither Officers nor Soldiers proper for that Purpose, which, according to their own Scheme, is impossible ever to have ; neither do they consider, or perhaps know, that our Navy costs us, at least, two Millions a Year, and out of that at least five hundred thousand Pounds is Money laid out where the Balance of Trade is against us ; nor do they consider that the Views of *France* are not yet ripe for attempting a Superiority at Sea, neither is that their present Aim ; and not conceiving that *France* aims only at striking sure, by first establishing herself on the maritime Continent, they are misled into a System at once both absurd and ridiculous ; they are only for employing a military Force at Sea, and finding their Allies Money for carrying it on by Land.

This is what I conceive our Allies would in some Sense rather chuse, because they could perhaps with our Money supply more Forces, and raise more Officers ; and if we had no idle People that do more harm than good at home, nor had ever a Prospect of wanting Officers to defend us ; that is to say, if we were sure our Navy could always, in all Weathers guard our Coasts, it would be something ; but if we are to judge by Facts, the Contrary has been plainly the Case. We had a Fleet when King *William* landed at *Torbay*, and so we had but the other Day

in the *Downs*, when the *French* lay almost in sight of it ; yet to what Purpose ? King *William* did land, and the *French* might have so done, if their Intentions and Preparations had been suited : And a Man must be a very great Stranger to maritime Affairs not to know, that considering Part of our Fleet, great as it is, must always be employed at a Distance, those which remain at home, were they twice as many, are insufficient to prevent an Enemy's landing. Does it not then plainly follow that we ought, either to have experienc'd Officers and Veteran Soldiers, or that we stake our Liberties and Properties on a very bad Principle ; and consequently, if we must assist our Allies, is it not better to train up some of our own Officers and Soldiers, to Action, than pay our Money for training others ; are they not more likely to serve the State, and more ready on any Emergency, than Strangers ? Will any Man own this, and yet insist that we ought only to employ a Navy ?

'Tis certainly true, that was our Navy an establish'd Militia, equally disciplin'd both for Land and Sea, something might be said in favour of an Hypothesis, which, as things are circumstanc'd, is plainly erroneous, and only advanced, either to make a Ministry always in the wrong, or because those who advance it are too wise to see more than one Side of the Question ; and who idle conclude, because

cause a Navy is of real Importance, therefore nothing else can be of any use. A wise Man guards himself on all Sides, and studies to countermine his Enemy every where, it being of little Consequence to say, he was ruined by Measures he neither foresaw nor guarded against.

How silly must one of these peremptory Scriblers look, when he is shown to be an utter Stranger to the Subject he engages in, and presumes, purely on the Credit of Ignorance and Impudence, to dictate at once both to the Sovereign and People; when he is so far from knowing what a Royal Navy is capable of doing, or not doing, that he is not only an absolute Stranger to its Discipline, Order and Management, but has not any manner of Conception, when, or why it can, or cannot act, as attended by a Variety of Contingencies, nor perhaps knows what sort of a thing a Ship of War is; has no more Comprehension of the Course of publick Affairs than a Goose; is a Stranger to the Counsels that gives them Motion, and to the Reasons whereon they are grounded, and still more so to distant Events; and yes will presume to prescribe by saying, this is right, or that wrong, because he dare do it.

There is a remarkable Story in the Lady's Travels into *Spain*, of a Cobler who took upon himself to direct the Theatre at *Madrid*, and to determine peremptorily, not only whether

ther the Actors performed justly, but also how the Poet wrote. The Impudence of this Fellow was grown to such height, and the Infatuation of the better Sort of People so notorious, that either every Actor and every Poet must pay their Court to him, both with Complaisance and Money, or neither must be suffered to act or write with Applause.

Impudence is the common Attribute of all Nations, and there always will be some People in each who glory in it, as thereby to make some amends to themselves for the Defects of Nature or Education; and as it is not difficult to find People of all Ranks, who either thro' Ignorance, or Distrust of themselves, receive tacitly the Dictates of the Overbearing, so as long as Impudence subsists it will be attended by a Train of Admirers.

This is perhaps more peculiarly the Case in *England* than in any other Nation, because those who are so disposed are at Liberty to write and say almost what they please with Impunity; and whom, while they reason justly, are Examples of the noble Effects of Liberty; while those who behave otherwise, fix an eternal Sarcastm on the greatest Blessing on Earth.

Of the latter Sort, we not only see News-Writers and Coblers, but find them immixt with a gawdy Throng, whose narrow Conception of things, or Thoughtlessness, ingulph
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them in the same confined Whirlpool, where they play eternally in one perpetual Round. But would Men take pains to enlarge their Minds ever so little, they would not only see the dangerous Tendency of the Pursuits of *France*, but they would also see it in a Light adequate to the Danger: They would see evidently, that the Assistance given to the Emperor, is not with a View of extending their own Conquests that way, but thereby to fix an Influence over those Powers who are capable of impeding her real Pursuit, until she gains so much additional maritime Coast as may enable her to command the universal Commerce, which is in reality affecting universal Monarchy, without being plagued with the Government of numberless Subjects; it being much easier to govern dependant Princes; and the Princes of *Europe* are in all Probability only to be rendered absolutely dependant, by those in whose Power it is to make them rich or poor at Pleasure.

In this Light, let the *French* march their Armies where they please, *Flanders* is still the sole Object of their Pursuit on the one Side, and *Italy* on the other, and Success therein can only crown their extensive Views, and establish their Power on a fixt and lasting Basis. The rest follows of course, and then, and not till then, will they attempt to command the Ocean, which the then Increase of Seamen and Shipping will probably enable them

them to effect, and which until then is morally impracticable.

This is what induces them to make such bold Efforts, and to put all at a Venture, for the obtaining so glorious a Crisis. The not attending to this, is what misleads People into the conceiving that a Paradox, which is clear and obvious as Light. They can't apprehend how *France* should be much less able, and yet make so much bolder Pushes than we towards Power; but the Solution is very easy, when we come to consider our different turns of thinking. *Britain* has always been at best, but an humble Imitator of great and extended Designs; while *France* has ever steadily pursued great Projects: *Britain* has always been content with moderate Acquisitions, and those almost forced upon her; while *France* has ever appeared in the Light of a bold Gamester, who borrows from, cheats, or robs Friends and Foes indifferently, in order to obtain a superior Fortune, to appear in Splendor, and laugh at all he has bubbled; and although he miss his Pursuits and is undone, he is not a Beggar to common Apprehension till that happens. And if after that he can find People weak enough to give him farther Encouragement, he resumes his wonted Pursuits, and in the End perhaps triumphs.

Lewis the XIV. was this kind of Gamester; he ventured all, and more than all, to attain

attain his Ends, but was defeated and ruin'd, without other Resource than in our Follies. We consented to set him up again. His Successor pursues his Maxims, and triumphs: But one would not learn from the Weakness of our Ancestors to run into worse Errors, and because they first ruin'd *Lewis* and then set him up again, that therefore we must suffer his Successor to pursue the same wicked Courses, and triumph.

It was a Maxim amongst the old *Romans*, to try their Strength with the greater Alacrity against their most formidable Enemies: The Reason was dictated to them by Common Sense, since the more formidable the Enemy was, the nearer they were to Destruction, if not opposed in time. The *Romans* knew the Use of a Navy as well as the *English*, yet made it not their whole Dependance; they knew it would keep an Enemy in awe, as it assisted their Armies, and warded them to their Doors, but never were weak enough to conclude it sufficient to conquer them. War appear'd to them necessary to be pursued in every Light, but, I believe, neither the *Romans* nor any other Nation ever dreamt of sitting down quiet, and suffering their Neighbours to grow too powerful for them, which is a Sentiment, nothing but modern Politicks could possibly inspire.

In the whole, I take it for granted, that every thinking Man in the Kingdom agrees

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to the Necessity of reducing the Power of *France*, but are not all agreed about the Means 'Tis plain that no body approves of their having a powerful Navy at Sea, but then they must not approve of the only Means that can produce it. Any Prince can build a Fleet who has Sea-ports for that Purpose; but they only can put it to Sea, and keep it there, who have Wealth and Seamen sufficient. In the present Course of the Politics of *France*, Money is not to be had to answer the Purposes of both Land and Sea, and therefore they pursue that first, which is naturally to produce the last, which nothing seems to me so immediately capable of preventing, as the keeping them employed in *Germany*, where they must at once bury both their Wealth and People; and whilst that can be done, there is no great Fear of their conquering *Flanders*, nor consequently of their raising a superior Navy: And therefore if it be true, as our Minor Politicians say, that our Business there is only to defend *Hanover*, I hope there will always be a *Hanover* there for that special Purpose, that so the *French* may be always kept in *Germany*, at the Hazard of the Ruin of *France*; and I conceive that if there was neither a *Hanover*, nor a House of *Austria* in *Germany*, yet one would contrive to find something else to keep them employed on that Side to keep them in a perpetual waste of Wealth and Strength, rather

ther than that they should come with their whole Force and Vigour to our own Doors, which, for want of other Employment, would naturally follow.

The *French* grow rich in Peace, but it will be strange if they do so in War too. How are we to consider them now, but as a People caught in a Trap of their own making? Shall we let them out quietly to grow rich and great, and that too by suffering them to acquire such Additions as can most effectually make them so? Shall we let the Robber out of our Neighbour's Toils, and bring him to plunder our Houses. He is either powerful, or he is not: if he is, surely he is best at a Distance: If he is not, then will his bold Efforts produce his Destruction? So that take it which way we will, now the Ball is up, 'tis best to keep it in Motion, which I conceive will not be easily done without *Britain* being one of the Gamesters, and is content to play a double Game upon him, on Land and Water. If we can distress his Armies abroad, a little good Conduct will ruin his Commerce by Sea; and so long as we, by a steady and resolv'd Behaviour, can keep him from acquiring more Sea-Coast, so long we may without Vanity say, We will have the Dominion of the Ocean. In a Word, if the same Sovereign who governs *England*, governs *Hanover* too, and is content

tent to let the Enemy play his Tricks on that Side, to keep him the farther from us, I don't see why we should be disturbed at a little Expence, and vex ourselves because we are so much the farther off from being ruined.

F I N I S.

